

**SAN DIEGO COUNTY
VETERAN ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES**

San Diego County Veterans Service Office
5560 Overland Avenue, Suite 310, San Diego CA 92123
Meeting of September 12, 2015

Meeting held at the Veterans Museum and Memorial Center in Balboa Park (VMMC)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mary Beth Newton, District 1; Ted Kagan, District 2; Laurie Martell, District 3; John Weaver, District 4;

MEMBERS ABSENT

Commander Navy Region Southwest (U); Ben Dillingham, Member-at-Large (E); Nancy Owen, Member-at-Large (E); Michael Robledo, District 5 (U); Will Rodriguez, Member-at-Large (U)

OTHERS PRESENT

Wil Quintong, Military & Veterans Affairs Officer, San Diego County; Whitney Willis, Veterans Community Services; Rose McFadden, Veterans Community Services.

1. Call to Order

Mary Beth Newton called the meeting to order at 9:30 am

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Introductions/Public (3 minutes)

Whitney Willis and Rose McFadden attended. They work for the Veterans Community Services where they service the homeless veterans' population and work to prevent veterans' homelessness in San Diego. They are a non-profit VA grant funded organization. They also work with the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) targeting veterans who depend only on their GI Bill for their income. They are involved with 25 Cities and serve all of San Diego County with 6 different offices. Their staff is about 70 people. Wil Quintong informed them of the new Military & Veterans Resource Center in Escondido and the non-profits organizations that have presence there. He invited them to visit the office.

4. Approval of Minutes Previous Meeting

No quorum

5. Chairman's Report

No report

Legislative

John Weaver spoke about the Toxic Exposures Act. HR-1769 said it has been reintroduced. This is a multi-generational bipartisan research effort on the effects of toxins on 2nd and 3rd generations of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces. John asked for the County's support of this bill. Wil Quintong asked for John to send him more information on this bill and he would have someone look into it.

One VA

No update

United Veterans Council (UVC)

Wil Quintong attended the UVC meeting. Rocky Chavez attended. One of Jeff Gering's staff members briefed on new initiatives the VA Medical Center is working on. Wil gave an update at this meeting on what the County is currently working on to support veterans.

Chula Vista Veterans Home (CVVH)

No update

Office of Military and Veterans Affairs (OMVA)

Wil Quintong advised the office's name officially changed to Office of Military and Veterans Affairs. This will emphasize support to active duty together with veterans and their families.

Wil spoke about the last 211 Coalition meeting. Jeff Gering made a presentation. One of them was on Operation Iraqi freedom. San Diego is the number one area in the country where veterans are settling since 2010.

The Media event for the Vet Connect Pilot in the Julian County Library is scheduled for October 6, 2015. Supervisor Dianne Jacob will be present. Wil invited the VAC members to attend. It will be at 5560 Overland Avenue, third floor, Joaquin Aguilera training meeting room at 10:00 am. Chairman Bill Horn may attend. Demonstration of Vet Connect processing of claims via teleconferencing will be done.

Libraries where we have outreach currently are El Cajon, Rancho San Diego, Pine Valley Julian and we recently added Ramona to the list of a rotating County Representatives. We are going to add Borrego Springs and Campo in the next months. We also have liaison with the Chula Vista City Library.

Military and Veterans Resource Center's (MVRC) Ribbon Cutting Ceremony is scheduled on the 21st of September. An invitation was sent via email to all VAC members. . Chairman Bill Horn is going to speak. This is the inauguration for the North Inland Live Well Center located at 649 W. Mission Avenue, Escondido CA 92025. It is from 1:30 pm to 4 pm. Open to the public.

The Board Conference is scheduled for November 17, in the morning. The Board meeting for the Board of Supervisors will be in the afternoon. Supervisor Bill Horn will be speaking about what each department in the San Diego County is doing to support veterans.

The Office has hired 3 new Veteran Services Representatives and is still looking for one more. These are in addition to staff currently in the office.

Wil attended the female Reboot graduation on Sep 4, at Liberty Station. Each graduate had an amazing story on how the class helped and motivated them. The guest speaker was Congresswoman Susan Davis.

6. Community Reports

Ted Kagan informed that the city of El Cajon will have their veteran's celebration on November 11th at City Hall.

On September 10th last Thursday, Ted attended a veteran's job fair at the Sports Arena. Said there were over 150 booths. This was hosted by the Veterans Employment Council and EDD. He said they did an outstanding job.

Ted also attended The Spirit of 45 celebration at the Midway on August 15th. Over 4000 people attended.

Wil is going to be a panelist at the LGBT for the Veterans Community conference. It is going to be hosted by one of the Social Security administrators. Patrick Prieb, VA Regional Director is also a panelist. It will be at the Shalom Synagogue, 2512 Third Avenue, San Diego CA 92103 at 8:30 am. Wil invited the VAC members to attend. See flyer attachment 1.

Mary Beth will be attending the Bi-Annual HHSA Advisory Board Chair Meeting on September 18th at 8:30 a. m. at the County.

Mary Beth also reminded that the 26th Annual Military Women's Luncheon is going to be on October 31st, 2015 at the Marine Corps Air Stations. See flyer attachment 2.

The Veteran of the Year luncheon will be on November 6th at the Scottish Rite Center.

Ted Kagan also mentioned The Veterans Day Parade is on November 11th hosted by the Midway.

Mary Beth also spoke about the vacant VAC seat formerly occupied by Terry Jensen and asked everyone to pass the information to anyone that would be interested in filling this member at large position. The information is on the county website www.sandiegocounty.gov/cob.

7. Unfinished Business

No

8. New Business

No

9. Closing Remarks

Mary Beth thanked everyone for attending

10. Adjourned

10:30 am